

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 379

Reaffirming the first amendment right to freely exercise religious beliefs
without the fear of governmental condemnation.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 24, 2000

Mr. GRAHAM submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was
referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Reaffirming the first amendment right to freely exercise religious beliefs without the fear of governmental condemnation.

Whereas the first amendment states that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof”;

Whereas the practice and expression of religious beliefs without congressional interference are a cherished freedom in our constitutional democracy;

Whereas it is imperative in our constitutional democracy that all major political parties unite in defending and protecting the first amendment religious rights of all Americans;

Whereas action taken by Congress to condemn any constitutionally protected religious practice or belief will have a chilling effect and stifle the religious freedoms that Americans enjoy;

Whereas the political act of congressional condemnation of religious beliefs or practices would seriously undermine the spirit of the first amendment;

Whereas hundreds of thousands of Americans have fought and died around the world under the banner of the United States to defend the right of all Americans to practice their religious beliefs free from governmental condemnation; and

Whereas the first amendment's function is to protect the religious freedoms of those Americans who may find themselves in the minority regarding religious practices and beliefs: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) as an institution, reaffirms the rights of
4 United States citizens to hold religious beliefs and
5 engage in constitutionally protected religious prac-
6 tices free from congressional condemnation;

7 (2) affirms that the right to religious diversity
8 in our country is one of the fundamental precepts of
9 the Constitution;

10 (3) should pass no resolution condemning the
11 right of any group or individual to express his or her
12 religious beliefs, popular or unpopular, as protected

1 by the first amendment, even when those practices
2 and beliefs are deemed to be offensive to individual
3 Members of Congress;

4 (4) recognizes the constitutionally protected
5 right of religious groups to practice their religion
6 without fear of reprisal from Congress, even when
7 individual Members of Congress may be offended by
8 such beliefs or practices;

9 (5) recognizes that, more than 200 years after
10 adoption of the Constitution, Congress reaffirms
11 that the wisdom of the first amendment's protection
12 of religious freedom rings as true today as when the
13 words were first penned; and

14 (6) should never be tempted as a body politic
15 to condemn religious views, because to do so would
16 lead to serious erosion of religious freedom.

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